/98 cont./

587 [589] 836 [765] A widow has freedom of sexual intercourse. There is no definite period of mourning for her deceased husband and she may remarry at any time, except that she must have the approval of the brothers of the deceased husband. If either the elder or the younger brother of the deceased wishes to marry the widowed sister-in-law, then she may not marry an outsider. Otherwise she returns to her family to marry again. At the time of the second marriage a sorcerer priest is also asked to perform the ritual. There is no go-between nor a formally set date. At the wedding the "shame-covering parasol" must be opened fully. On reaching her new husband's home she enters by the front entrance. /99/ A widow may marry again and again. Furthermore, she can have a husband marry into her household.

(3) Birth

842 [782] 843 844 Despite the hard life of the Miao, the desire for sons is very strong with both rich and poor. When a Miao man has no son at middle age he must pray to the gods and make a vow, for the early birth of a son. A pregnant Miao woman keeps on working. At the time of delivery, they use a bamboo sifter placed on the ground, lined with cotton wadding on which is placed a layer of ragged garments. The woman stands with her legs apart, the body slightly bending, her two hands gripping the side of a bed or a bench. If she happens to be working on a mountainside and does not have time to get back home, then she chooses a place under the shade of a tree where she can easily get a grip. If the newborn child does not cry, she digs [825] out a blood clot from its mouth, or sometimes she keeps a cat ready on the side, and hits it to make it meow so as to startle the infant awake. In case of complicated childbirth, an experienced old woman in the village is asked to help extract 845 the child with the hands. Should an infant die in the womb, it is taken out with a hook, or sometimes a sorcerer priest is

845 /99 cont./
asked to utter and write spells to hasten the womb. After the
844 infant is born the cord is cut with a pair of scissors and the placenta is buried in the ground in the house or outside.

After childbirth a Miao woman drinks several bowls of cold water for the purpose of purifying her blood. Within three days
846 she goes out to the fields to work. There are cases in which a woman gives birth in the forenoon and goes out to work in the afternoon. It is said that the Miao woman is able to do this by
[278] eating a secret herb. For postnatal nourishment the poor eats
[556] eggs and the rich eat; chicken.

553 Recently, the Miao have adopted the Chinese custom of
[177] inviting friends and relatives to a feast and naming ceremony on the third day after a child's birth. A name is sometimes
551 adopted according to the time of birth. For instance, if a child is born in a certain month, it would be named after the month. The chief of the Miao at the time of the rebellion during the
[805] reign of Emperor Ch'ien Lung was called Wu pa-yüeh /Wu, Eighth Month/. Sometimes the name of the season when the birth occurred is adopted. In another case, the weight of the infant may be used as the name, for instance, an infant weighing so many chin at birth will be named for that weight. In still other cases, the name of an animal, a pig, goat, sheep, dog, or cow is used in the belief that the child will be easy to raise.

853 There is no definite time for feeding the baby. Generally when the baby cries it is fed. If the mother has no milk, the baby is then fed with sugar and rice. At the time of teething,
856 if the first tooth emerges in the upper jaw, it is a sign of ill
[787] omen, portending the death of one of the parents or paternal
[763] grandparents, because the Miao believe that such a tooth is a
[826] grave-digging hoe.

/100/ A pregnant unmarried girl often produces an abortion
847 by swallowing mercury. Illegitimate infants are often drowned.
848 Properly married couples rarely practice abortion or infanticide.

/49 cont./

846 After the delivery the mother remains on her bed, and the husband cares for her in the same manner as at the end of her pregnancy. The husband tries to relieve her of all work. The length of the confinement depends on economic circum-
[556] stances. Among poor people it often lasts only a few days, among prosperous women it sometimes extends up to thirty days. In any case, among the Meau, it is prolonged as much as possible, since it is believed that the longer the confinement the healthier and stronger the woman will become and the more children she will therefore be able to bear.

I was unable to find any traces of the couvade among the Meau. On the other hand, Abadie (1) reported that the custom

1. Page 165.

occurs among some Meau tribes in China. He adds that in Tonkin this custom is not practiced, but that one could observe practices that seem to be derived from it. The author then mentions as such practices: "Vegetarian diet for the husband; a prohibition against his being absent or crossing the heights that form the boundary toward the neighboring valleys." Much more convincing is an illustration of the couvade given by Chang-Kong Chiu in his Kultur der Miao-tse (2) and the illustration in

2. Page 59.

the Album Gotha (3). In these cases, however, it is not en-

3. Reproduced in the Ostasiatischen Zeitschrift, 1916, p. 281.

tirely certain whether these illustrations actually refer to the Meau or perhaps to another Chinese mountain tribe.

● 845 The Meau are especially happy about the birth of twins
[777] and regard it as an omen of good luck. They even try to raise
[732] weaklings, deformed children, and cripples. The hard struggle for survival, however, almost always prevents their growing up.

/236 cont./

757 Individual medications of the Meau are extraordinarily complicated in their manufacture. For example, in the fight against amoebic dysentery, unsuccessful though it is, a mixture consisting of 21 substances is given. For skin diseases, especially scabies, the Meau use a medicine called tăun yă. It is made from the sap of a whole number of various trees, lianas, and euphorbias and is used externally. Gonorrhea is treated with an herb extract taken internally. Its efficacy, which I could not test, is supposed to be good.

752 The Meau are also successful in the treatment of wounds, as I was able to ascertain. They take the foliage of two large-
[824] leaved climbing plant, called yă yû and mā tlăń, crush the green leaves in equal amounts, and apply the substance to the
[276] wound. Opium is eaten to ease pain and also for diarrhea.
[757] There is supposed to be a remedy which produces contraction of the uterus and which is given in connection with difficult
●845 births.

757 In addition to remedies which possibly are actually effective medically, the Meau use a whole number of quack medicines.
[847] For example, the dried human umbilical cord placed upon persons who have fainted is said to revive them. For struma, a tuber, kă, roasted and pounded, is applied. Its inefficacy is clearly seen by the extraordinary frequency of struma. The
752 remedies of the Meau for snake bites and scorpion stings are also ineffective. For the bite of the green tree-snake, crushed gourd
[827] leaves are put on the place of the bite; for cobra bites, ear wax.
[276] For python bites, tartar is placed on the wound; for other snake bites, opium again is applied.

177 In addition, Chinese medicines play an important role;
278 among them the aphrodisiacs in particular are very numerous,
832 almost all of which can be traced back to Chinese origin. For example, the pulverized horn of the rhinoceros, for which the Chinese /237/ pay up to 1,000 marks apiece, is used as a means of strengthening waning sexual powers. Pulverized stag-antlers in bast serve the same purpose, for which the horn from a knaggy stag /Kolbenhirsch/ is regarded as almost more valuable than

/237 cont./

177 the horn of the rhinoceros. Furthermore, the penis of a steer,
278 which is taken pulverized, is regarded as a good aphrodisiac.
832 Among the medications of the Meau many efficacious ones may be found in view of the intelligence and excellent
757 power of observation of these people, as well as the fact that
278 they are often successful in combatting disease. In my opinion
114 it would be quite worthwhile for our modern medicine to test the medications of the Meau pharmacologically. We must not forget that a whole series of our medicines go back originally to medicinal plants of peoples usually much more primitive than the Meau. I shall mention here only opium, kola, cocaine! It can hardly be assumed that among the hundreds of medicines that the Meau physician uses no actually useful ones would be found.

Unfortunately I was not permitted the time to occupy myself with this special problem. In addition, my botanical knowledge was not sufficient for classifying the medicinal herbs put before me. Hence I had to limit myself to listing the names of the most important drugs in order to obtain at least a general view of those diseases that the Meau themselves are able to treat successfully.

• 845 In obstetrics the Meau are quite skillful. For example, even in transverse presentation they are able to turn the child in the uterus by reaching in through the vagina with the hand and assisting the work of the hand through massage from the outside.

752 They are most skillful, however, in the treatment of bone fractures, which are carefully set and bound with two splints and bandages. On the other hand they are not capable of doing
[845] trepanation and surgical operations, such as the opening of abscesses, Caesarean section, and so forth.

278 Arrow poison plays an important role among the Meau. It is said to be very effective, so that only two arrows shot from the crossbow is sufficient to kill even the strongest gaur within three or four hours. Possibly a poison affecting the heart may be involved. /238/ Extraordinary care is devoted to its manufacture. The basic substance is obtained from the bark of certain trees in the primeval forest, probably euphorbias according